

Gender Bias

(Definitely)

Centralized Control

Please take some time to consider a reason for the incident in the church that is described below. As you do; the main thing that I want you to think about is this: Why did God have to press the members of the church to such a rigorous pattern of compliance? Also consider this: Was the resulting upheaval, in some fashion, an avoidable outcome?

But a certain man named Ananias, with Sapphira his wife, sold a possession, And kept back part of the price, his wife also being privy to it, and brought a certain part, and laid it, at the apostles' feet.

But Peter said, Ananias, why hath Satan filled thine heart to lie to the Holy Ghost, and to keep back part of the price of the land? Whiles it remained, was it not thine own? and after it was sold, was it not in thine own power? why hast thou conceived this thing in thine heart? thou hast not lied unto men, but unto God.

And Ananias hearing these words fell down, and gave up the ghost: and great fear came on all them that heard these things. And the young men arose, wound him up, and carried him out, and buried him.

And it was about the space of three hours after, when his wife, not knowing what was done, came in. And Peter answered unto her, Tell me whether ye sold the land for so much?

And she said, Yea, for so much.

Then Peter said unto her, How is it that ye have agreed together to tempt the Spirit of the Lord? behold, the feet of them which have buried thy husband are at the door, and shall carry thee out.

Then fell she down straightway at his feet, and yielded up the ghost: and the young men came in, and found her dead, and, carrying her forth, buried her by her husband.

And great fear came upon all the church, and upon as many as heard these things.

(Acts 5:1-11)

To get a little closer to the matter of control in the church, as it is set above human convenience; we will share an event of the life of Jesus. If you really think about the event, you might come to the conclusion that there are certain things that are made to go wrong, so that the glory of God can be highlighted. Actually, that is not too far from being correct; but, it is more than, that these things are just a burden for us. In fact, it is a way of lightening our load; in that, it places the burden on God to provide perfection for mankind, as opposed to placing the burden

on mankind to be able to reconcile imperfection. For that reason, we should draw back, somewhat, from our angst about any present perception of peril. Take a look at the following Scripture, and see if you can determine what the true message of the event is.

And as Jesus passed by, he saw a man which was blind from his birth. And his disciples asked him, saying, Master, who did sin, this man, or his parents, that he was born blind?

Jesus answered, Neither hath this man sinned, nor his parents: but that the works of God should be made manifest in him.

(John 9:1-3)

Sometimes, things will go wrong in life and in the church. The church must be ready to handle the things that go contrary to either expectation or desire, or both. I do not think that I will get any argument, as I say that there was surely a need for order in the Old Testament church in the wilderness. There are many examples of that need, but the comprehensive one is described in this Scripture.

And it came to pass on the morrow, that Moses sat to judge the people: and the people stood by Moses from the morning unto the evening.

And when Moses' father in law saw all that he did to the people, he said, What is this thing that thou doest to the people? why sittest thou thyself alone, and all the people stand by thee from morning unto even?

And Moses said unto his father in law, Because the people come unto me to enquire of God: When they have a matter, they come unto me; and I judge between one and another, and I do make them know the statutes of God, and his laws.

And Moses' father in law said unto him, The thing that thou doest is not good. Thou wilt surely wear away, both thou, and this people that is with thee: for this thing is too heavy for thee; thou art not able to perform it thyself alone. Hearken now unto my voice, I will give thee counsel, and God shall be with thee:

Be thou for the people to God-ward, that thou mayest bring the causes unto God: And thou shalt teach them ordinances and laws, and shalt shew them the way wherein they must walk, and the work that they must do.

Moreover thou shalt provide out of all the people able men, such as fear God, men of truth, hating covetousness; and place such over them, to be rulers of thousands, and rulers of hundreds, rulers of fifties, and rulers of tens: And let them judge the people at all seasons: and it shall be, that every great matter they shall bring unto thee, but every small matter they shall judge: so shall it be easier for thyself, and they shall bear the burden with thee.

If thou shalt do this thing, and God command thee so, then thou shalt be able to endure, and all this people shall also go to their place in peace.

(Exodus 18:13-23)

Likewise, I would be somewhat surprised if there was anyone who denies a need for order in the modern church, in its many fragmented organizations, in their many denominations. That each one of these denominations is a slight shift away from the straight path is evidence enough for the need for order. Why can I make such a broad statement about denominations? There are two reasons, which I will state unfiltered.

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Reason One:

*Now they which were scattered abroad upon the persecution that arose about Stephen travelled as far as Phenice, and Cyprus, and Antioch, preaching the word to none but unto the Jews only. And some of them were men of Cyprus and Cyrene, which, when they were come to Antioch, spake unto the Grecians, preaching the Lord Jesus. And the hand of the Lord was with them: and a great number believed, and turned unto the Lord.*

*Then tidings of these things came unto the ears of the church which was in Jerusalem: and they sent forth Barnabas, that he should go as far as Antioch. Who, when he came, and had seen the grace of God, was glad, and exhorted them all, that with purpose of heart they would cleave unto the Lord. For he was a good man, and full of the Holy Ghost and of faith: and much people was added unto the Lord.*

*Then departed Barnabas to Tarsus, for to seek Saul: And when he had found him, he brought him unto Antioch. And it came to pass, that a whole year they assembled themselves with the church, and taught much people.  
And the disciples were called Christians first in Antioch.*

(Acts 11:19-26)

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Reason two:

And I, brethren, could not speak unto you as unto spiritual, but as unto carnal, even as unto babes in Christ. I have fed you with milk, and not with meat: for hitherto ye were not able to bear it, neither yet now are ye able. For ye are yet carnal: for whereas there is among you envying, and strife, and divisions, are ye not carnal, and walk as men? For while one saith, I am of Paul; and another, I am of Apollos; are ye not carnal?

Who then is Paul, and who is Apollos, but ministers by whom ye believed, even as the Lord gave to every man? I have planted, Apollos watered; but God gave the

increase. So then neither is he that planteth any thing, neither he that watereth; but God that giveth the increase.

(1 Corinthians 3:1-7)

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Of course, reasons need to have supporting doctrine. So, here are some statements about the foundational doctrine that highlight the church's need for further travel toward, and in, the LORD.

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Preferred worship structure--*in the power of God:*

And I, brethren, when I came to you, came not with excellency of speech or of wisdom, declaring unto you the testimony of God. For I determined not to know any thing among you, save Jesus Christ, and him crucified. And I was with you in weakness, and in fear, and in much trembling.

And my speech and my preaching was not with enticing words of man's wisdom, but in demonstration of the Spirit and of power: That your faith should not stand in the wisdom of men, but in the power of God.

(1 Corinthians 2:1-5)

Example of a structure that sits outside, but that is pressing hard to enter--*help thou mine unbelief:*

And when he came to his disciples, he saw a great multitude about them, and the scribes questioning with them. And straightway all the people, when they beheld him, were greatly amazed, and running to him saluted him. And he asked the scribes, What question ye with them?

And one of the multitude answered and said, Master, I have brought unto thee my son, which hath a dumb spirit; And wheresoever he taketh him, he teareth him: and he foameth, and gnasheth with his teeth, and pineth away: and I spake to thy disciples that they should cast him out; and they could not.

He answereth him, and saith, O faithless generation, how long shall I be with you? how long shall I suffer you? bring him unto me.

And they brought him unto him: and when he saw him, straightway the spirit tare him; and he fell on the ground, and wallowed foaming.

And he asked his father, How long is it ago since this came unto him?

And he said, Of a child. And ofttimes it hath cast him into the fire, and into the waters, to destroy him: but if thou canst do any thing, have

compassion on us, and help us.
Jesus said unto him, If thou canst believe, all things are possible to him that believeth.

And straightway the father of the child cried out, and said with tears, Lord, I believe; help thou mine unbelief.

(Mark 9:14-24)

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Still binding structure, even though it was corrupted by man--*Moses' seat*:

*Then spake Jesus to the multitude, and to his disciples, Saying The scribes and the Pharisees sit in Moses' seat: All therefore whatsoever they bid you observe, that observe and do;*

*but do not ye after their works: for they say, and do not.*

*For they bind heavy burdens and grievous to be borne, and lay them on men's shoulders; but they themselves will not move them with one of their fingers. But all their works they do for to be seen of men: they make broad their phylacteries, and enlarge the borders of their garments, And love the uppermost rooms at feasts, and the chief seats in the synagogues, And greetings in the markets, and to be called of men, Rabbi, Rabbi.*

(Matthew 23:1-7)

. . . Still, that structure's associated requirement needs to be honored--*keep the whole law*:

*If ye fulfil the royal law according to the scripture, Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself, ye do well: But if ye have respect to persons, ye commit sin, and are convinced of the law as transgressors.*

*For whosoever shall keep the whole law, and yet offend in one point, he is guilty of all. For he that said, Do not commit adultery, said also, Do not kill.*

*Now if thou commit no adultery, yet if thou kill, thou art become a transgressor of the law.*

(James 2:8-11)

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Moreover, there is still more history that needs to be inserted into the books of man; remembering that these are also seen by the Father. The following Scripture tells us of the images that we need to include in our fully functional service to the LORD; before we can even come close to saying that we have arrived.

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Connecting force, between the Covenants--*to fulfil*:

*Think not that I am come to destroy the law, or the prophets: I am not come to destroy, but to fulfil. For verily I say unto you, Till heaven and earth pass, one jot or one tittle shall in no wise pass from the law, till all be fulfilled. Whosoever therefore shall break one of these least commandments, and shall teach men so, he shall be called the least in the kingdom of heaven: but whosoever shall do and teach them, the same shall be called great in the kingdom of heaven.*

*For I say unto you, That except your righteousness shall exceed the righteousness of the scribes and Pharisees, ye shall in no case enter into the kingdom of heaven.*

(Matthew 5:17-20)

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Affirmation of the connection, as being one that is ordained by God--*for righteousness*:

Brethren, my heart's desire and prayer to God for Israel is, that they might be saved. For I bear them record that they have a zeal of God, but not according to knowledge. For they being ignorant of God's righteousness, and going about to establish their own righteousness, have not submitted themselves unto the righteousness of God.

For Christ is the end of the law for righteousness to every one that believeth.

(Romans 10:1-4)

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As I hear the various politically correct statements about where the church needs to be in the Modern Age, I recognize them for what they truly are: external forces that press to gain control.

*Finally, my brethren, be strong in the Lord, and in the power of his might. Put on the whole armour of God, that ye may be able to stand against the wiles of the devil. For we wrestle not against flesh and blood, but against principalities, against powers, against the rulers of the darkness of this world, against spiritual wickedness in high places.*

*Wherefore take unto you the whole armour of God, that ye may be able to withstand in the evil day, and having done all, to stand.*

(Ephesians 6:10-13)

We must resist these sorts of efforts. This is a necessity, even for the ones that have a covering of religiosity, bordering on Christianity. The apostle Paul told us about this.

*Stand therefore, having your loins girt about with truth, and having on the breastplate of righteousness; And your feet shod with the preparation of the gospel of peace; Above all, taking the shield of faith, wherewith ye shall be able*

*to quench all the fiery darts of the wicked.*

*And take the helmet of salvation, and the sword of the Spirit, which is the word of God: Praying always with all prayer and supplication in the Spirit, and watching thereunto with all perseverance and supplication for all saints; And for me, that utterance may be given unto me, that I may open my mouth boldly, to make known the mystery of the gospel, For which I am an ambassador in bonds: that therein I may speak boldly, as I ought to speak.*

(Ephesians 6:14-20)

The church cannot allow itself to be overtaken by the agendas of external power players. We need to recognize that the majority of these players have a political agenda, rather than being energized by the Spirit. Therefore, we need to place them in their proper category of service. The categories were given to us by Jesus Christ, as he communicated with his disciples, while also answering a challenge that comes from some of the religious leaders of that day.

*Then went the Pharisees, and took counsel how they might entangle him in his talk. And they sent out unto him their disciples with the Herodians, saying, Master, we know that thou art true, and teachest the way of God in truth, neither carest thou for any man: for thou regardest not the person of men. Tell us therefore, What thinkest thou? Is it lawful to give tribute unto Caesar, or not?*

*But Jesus perceived their wickedness, and said, Why tempt ye me, ye hypocrites? Shew me the tribute money.*

*And they brought unto him a penny.  
And he saith unto them, Whose is this image and superscription?  
They say unto him, Caesar's.*

*Then saith he unto them, Render therefore unto Caesar the things which are Caesar's; and unto God the things that are God's.*

(Matthew 22:15-21)

Remember: the political side of service is Caesar's; do not give that which belongs to the LORD to religion-covered politicians. *Give not that which is holy unto the dogs, neither cast ye your pearls before swine, lest they trample them under their feet, and turn again and rend you.* (Matthew 7:6)

Note: the preceding caution is not necessary for truly Spirit-filled politicians, or other worldly powerhouses that truly reverence the LORD. But, then; how does one know that one is in the presence of such a person? Yes, they do exist. We see an example of one, here.

*When the even was come, there came a rich man of Arimathaea, named Joseph, who also himself was Jesus' disciple: He went to Pilate, and begged the body of Jesus. Then Pilate commanded the body to be delivered.*

*And when Joseph had taken the body, he wrapped it in a clean linen cloth, And*

*laid it in his own new tomb, which he had hewn out in the rock: and he rolled a great stone to the door of the sepulchre, and departed.*

(Matthew 27:57-60)

But, even though there are some truly faith-based politicians and other dignitaries; still, it is best to keep things isolated, as far as sort of service that is given. However, we do not want you to be too shy about honoring those individuals that have truly placed their community outreach (whether it is local, city, state, federal, or international) in the Hand of the LORD. So, to help us understand the difference, we need to be aware of the architecture of the church. One of the places that the architecture of the church is presented to us is in this Scripture.

*Now ye are the body of Christ, and members in particular. And God hath set some in the church,*

*first apostles,*

*secondarily prophets,*

*thirdly teachers,*

*after that miracles,*

*then gifts of healings,*

*helps, governments, diversities of tongues.*

*Are all apostles? are all prophets? are all teachers? are all workers of miracles?*

*Have all the gifts of healing? do all speak with tongues? do all interpret?*

(1 Corinthians 12:27-30)

This description of the church does not have loopholes for either negotiation or substitution. Moreover, there are words of Scripture that tell of the organization of the church into offices. The descriptions that are in Scripture are both precision and comprehensive, and they must not be either abridged or expanded. For, either an abridgement or an expansion of Scripture corrupts the impact of the message.

As you read the Scripture that lays out the organizational structure of the church, you will note certain genders are indicated: these are precise gender specifications. In other Scripture, in addition to specific genders, certain prerequisite life experiences are stressed. When you see either of these types of presentations, they are a necessary part of the equipping of that particular type of servant of the LORD and of His Christ. An example of such precision is the following . . .

*This is a true saying, If a man desire the office of a bishop, he desireth a good work. A bishop then must be blameless, the husband of one wife, vigilant, sober, of good behaviour, given to hospitality, apt to teach; Not given to wine, no striker, not greedy of filthy lucre; but patient, not a brawler, not covetous; One that ruleth well his own house, having his children in subjection with all gravity; (For if a man know not how to rule his own house, how shall he take care of the church of God?)*

*Not a novice, lest being lifted up with pride he fall into the condemnation of the devil.*



*Moreover he must have a good report of them which are without; lest he fall into reproach and the snare of the devil.*

(1 Timothy 3:1-7)

Also, there is Scripture that pertains to women in service, in the church. Among those devotional statements is this one . . .

*Let not a widow be taken into the number under threescore years old, having been the wife of one man, Well reported of for good works; if she have brought up children, if she have lodged strangers, if she have washed the saints' feet, if she have relieved the afflicted, if she have diligently followed every good work.*

*But the younger widows refuse: for when they have begun to wax wanton against Christ, they will marry; Having damnation, because they have cast off their first faith. And withal they learn to be idle, wandering about from house to house; and not only idle, but tattlers also and busybodies, speaking things which they ought not.*

*I will therefore that the younger women marry, bear children, guide the house, give none occasion to the adversary to speak reproachfully. For some are already turned aside after Satan.*

(1 Timothy 5:9-15)

The purpose of the precision of the Scripture is to bring the church to perfection: this is how the Father designed our outreach to Him. Wherefore it is not for me, or you, to reformat the way to perfection. I will not challenge you for your acceptance of an approximation; but, rather, I refer your spirit to a discussion, which occurred between Joshua and the children of Israel, which is repeated below. In this discussion, to heighten their sensitivity to service, Joshua delivers and admonition to them, which strongly advises them to dedicate their service to the fulfilling the perfection to which they were called.

*Now therefore fear the LORD, and serve him in sincerity and in truth: and put away the gods which your fathers served on the other side of the flood, and in Egypt; and serve ye the LORD.*

*And if it seem evil unto you to serve the LORD, choose you this day whom ye will serve; whether the gods which your fathers served that were on the other side of the flood, or the gods of the Amorites, in whose land ye dwell:*

*but as for me and my house, we will serve the LORD.*

*And the people answered and said,*

*God forbid that we should forsake the LORD, to serve other gods; For the LORD our God, he it is that brought us up and our fathers out of the land of Egypt, from the house of bondage, and which did those great signs in our sight, and preserved us in all the way wherein we went, and among all the people*

*through whom we passed: And the LORD drave out from before us all the people, even the Amorites which dwelt in the land: therefore will we also serve the LORD; for he is our God.*

(Joshua 24:14-18)

Then, Joshua issues a challenge; to stir their warrior spirit, and set the tone for the struggle that was ahead for the congregation of Israel.

*And Joshua said unto the people, Ye cannot serve the LORD: for he is an holy God; he is a jealous God; he will not forgive your transgressions nor your sins. If ye forsake the LORD, and serve strange gods, then he will turn and do you hurt, and consume you, after that he hath done you good.*

*And the people said unto Joshua, Nay; but we will serve the LORD.*

*And Joshua said unto the people, Ye are witnesses against yourselves that ye have chosen you the LORD, to serve him.*

*And they said, We are witnesses.*

(Joshua 24:19-22)

Let us repeat Joshua's words: *we will serve the LORD.*

In like fashion, I declare, as Joshua did: I will also honor the LORD by obeying His Son as being the final word on proper church conduct. Moreover, I will do this in faithful service to God, the Father.

Will you do the same?

As you commit your self to this (or, not); please understand that you will be pulled to accept the world's way. My advice is that you accept the Lord's challenge, instead.

*Ye have heard that it hath been said, Thou shalt love thy neighbour, and hate thine enemy. But I say unto you, Love your enemies, bless them that curse you, do good to them that hate you, and pray for them which despitefully use you, and persecute you; That ye may be the children of your Father which is in heaven: for he maketh his sun to rise on the evil and on the good, and sendeth rain on the just and on the unjust.*

*For if ye love them which love you, what reward have ye? do not even the publicans the same? And if ye salute your brethren only, what do ye more than others? do not even the publicans so?*

*Be ye therefore perfect, even as your Father which is in heaven is perfect.*

(Matthew 5:43-48)

